

MEMORIAL.

LAWRASON BROWN, M.D.

By J. WOODS PRICE, M.D.

Dr. Lawrason Brown became a member of this Society thirty-four years ago and was its president in 1920. Throughout all these years he rarely failed to attend a meeting, frequently contributed to the program and always to the discussion. His interest in and love for the Climatological were so great that he was the first to see the need for a change of policy. At the Washington meeting in 1922, he asked a small group of enthusiastic members to meet him in the hotel room which he shared with Dr. Charles Minor. He expressed the belief that the need for a society such as the Climatological then was had passed, but that its friendly and helpful spirit should be preserved. That the papers should embrace broader clinical subjects than those only of especial interest to men living in Health Resorts, and that new members should be selected from workers in every field of clinical medicine. Dr. Gordon Wilson was present, saw the light and immediately set to work. That he was able to leaven the loaf is now a part of our history.

Dr. William Snow Miller in the final words of the Preface to his book "The Lung," said, "I acknowledge with gratitude my indebtedness to the group of unknown friends, who, under the leadership of Dr. Lawrason Brown of Saranac Lake, have made this publication possible." The unknown friends were mostly members of this Association who were interested in the undertaking by Dr. Brown. He could have obtained the whole fund from several sources with much less personal effort, but with his characteristic kindness felt that it would be a greater satisfaction to Dr. Miller to know that his work was appreciated by many of his confrères. Dr. Brown looked upon this as one of the useful things accomplished by the Climatological and hoped that it would in the future sponsor other movements helpful to the medical profession in general.

When the Society wanted to honor the memory of Dr. Gordon Wilson, a committee consisting of Dr. Brown and Dr. Walter Baetjer was appointed. Following their suggestion, we now enjoy each year a lecture from a distinguished clinician, which adds greatly to the interest of our program.

These are some of the things that the Climatological has accomplished, due in great part to the broad vision of him whom we are remembering at this moment.

Dr. Brown was born in Baltimore and educated in the schools of that city. He was a leader in the classroom and also on the athletic field. He played both football and baseball throughout his school and college days, and in later years became a good and enthusiastic golfer. He graduated with honor from the Johns Hopkins University in 1895. The next year he entered the Johns Hopkins Medical School. His personality, intelligence and application soon attracted the attention of his professors, especially Dr. Osler and Dr. Welsh. The friendship which began between pupil and masters deepened with the years and exerted a profound influence upon the younger man.

In his third year of medicine he developed tuberculosis and was sent to Saranac Lake. It was inevitable that such a student should attract the attention of Dr. Trudeau and that a close friendship would develop. At the end of a year in the Adirondacks he returned to Baltimore for his last year in medicine. Receiving his degree in 1900, he went to Saranac Lake to take charge of the Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium and there, with Dr. Trudeau, he did the work which first attracted attention. Dr. Trudeau's health had begun to fail and it was an immense relief to him to find a man into whose hands he could surrender the medical department of the Sanatorium. In his autobiography Dr. Trudeau said, "The methods were crude, the discipline imperfect, the records incomplete. The simple efficient rules of discipline, the thorough instruction of physicians, nurses and patients, the accurate medical reports and the exhaustive post-discharge records of all patients since the institution started all sprang into life as a result of Dr. Brown's insistent efforts for efficiency and continued progress."

It was from the study of these records that his early papers were written, in which he successfully combated preconceived ideas of

tuberculosis, based more upon impressions than critical analysis. As paper after paper appeared, his reputation as a profound student of the baffling problems of tuberculosis grew. Other sanatoria adopted his methods and the Trudeau Sanatorium and Saranac Laboratory, directed by Dr. Edward R. Baldwin, developed into teaching institutions that attracted many students.

While resident at the sanatorium, he organized the research laboratory in which the work on immunology was done by Petroff, the X-ray department where with Sampson the early diagnosis on intestinal tuberculosis was accomplished, and added many infirmary beds as he became more impressed with the value of rest.

This institutional work would have been enough for the average man, but in addition, he maintained a large private practice. To his patients he brought more than skillful medical advice. Believing that an occupied mind was essential in the cure of tuberculosis, he directed their reading, encouraged them in the study of bird life (probably his own chief hobby), of botany, bookbinding and the various crafts taught at the shop he established. He started the *Journal of Outdoor Life*, and edited it until it was taken over by the National Tuberculosis Association.

His interest in the development of the village of Saranac Lake as a better health resort was equally strong. He served his terms on the Village Board of Trustees, the Board of Trade, on the staffs of the Reception and General Hospitals; was a trustee of the Free Library; was one of the organizers of the Adirondack Good Roads Association and of the Stevenson Society of America for the collection of Stevensoniana and the preservation of the cottage in the village occupied by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1887, and founded the local Tuberculosis Society for the control of that large class of indigents which finds its way to all health centers. To this and other charities he gave as generously of his means as he did of his time and advice. He founded the Osler Club of Saranac Lake for the study of medical history and was a member of the Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

He was active in state and national affairs dealing with the problem of tuberculosis. He was one of the organizers of the National Tuberculosis Association and its president in 1922. He founded the American Sanatorium Association. The list of other national associa-

tions to which he belonged is too long to mention here. He was a member of the Boards of the Trudeau Sanatorium; the New York State Hospital at Ray Brook; the Waverly Hills Sanatorium at Louisville, Kentucky; the Potts Memorial at Livingston, N. Y.; the Henry Phipps Institute of Philadelphia; and the Milbank Foundation. He was appointed by the Surgeon General to the committee to evaluate the Framingham Demonstration and by Governor Lehman to the New York State Board of Social Welfare. During the World War he acted as consultant in tuberculosis and spent some time at Camp Devans.

His contributions to medical literature, in addition to numerous monographs, include "Rules for Recovery from Tuberculosis," "Intestinal Tuberculosis" (with Dr. Sampson), and "The Lung and Tuberculosis" (with Dr. Heise). He edited for many years the section of Diseases of the Chest in the "Year Book of General Medicine," and was on the editorial staff of "The American Review of Tuberculosis" from its beginning. He wrote chapters on tuberculosis for Osler and McCrea's "Modern Medicine;" Kleb's "Tuberculosis;" Tice's "Practice of Medicine;" Cecil's "Textbook of Medicine" and Blumer's "Therapeusis of Internal Disease."

In 1914 he married Miss Martha Lewis Harris of Baltimore, who with perfect understanding of his restless spirit and tireless energy smoothed the path to much that he accomplished.

It was inevitable that honor should come to him. The degree of Doctor of Science was conferred upon him by Dartmouth in 1931 and by the Medical College of Virginia at Richmond in 1936. Two other universities offered him degrees, which he could not accept because of ill health and which could not be bestowed *in absentia*. He was awarded the Trudeau medal in 1933. He was a member of the Phi Kappa Psi; Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha fraternities, and of the Charaka Club, and the Century and Grolier Clubs of New York.

His interests were by no means confined to medicine. An avid reader and collector of books, he had many first editions in his library. His notable collection of etchings and medals was a source of great pleasure to himself and his friends. His broad culture, his varied interests and his keen wit made him a delightful companion.

He neglected his health, while helping so many others to regain theirs, and even in the last two years of semi-invalidism he completed all but the last chapter of a history of tuberculosis.

He died on the 26th of December at the age of sixty-six, but the spirit of his devotion to the highest ideals in medicine and in life lives on in the memory of all who knew and loved him.